

Today's Topics:

ARRL Letter 01-Dec-89

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Date: 8 Dec 89 22:08:34 GMT  
From: n8emr!gws@tut.cis.ohio-state.edu (Gary Sanders)  
Subject: ARRL Letter 01-Dec-89  
Message-ID: <1377@n8emr.UUCP>

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| Relayed from packet radio via |  
| N8EMR's Ham BBS, 614-457-4227 (1200/2400/19.2 telebit,8N1) |  
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ARRL LETTER - December 1, 1989 - Volume 8 Number 24 - Part 1 of 3

#### CONGRESS AGREES: NO FEES FOR AMATEUR LICENSES!

The joint House-Senate Conference Committee, reviewing both versions of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989, has approved deletion of the amateur license fees from the legislation.

In its report released on November 21, the Conference Committee stated:  
"Both the House bill and the Senate bill include fees on licensees in the amateur radio service. The Conference Report strikes all of the fees for amateur radio licensees. The Conferees recognize that amateur licensees do not operate for profit and play an important public safety role in times of disaster or emergency."

In the early morning hours of November 22, both Houses of Congress adopted the Conference version of the bill sending it to President Bush for signature.

In the current budgetary environment, avoiding fees altogether is an enormous accomplishment. ARRL congratulates all who played an active role in writing to their Senators and Representatives helping in this effort. Look for an upcoming QST article that will detail how amateurs won this important battle.

#### SIX METERS IS HOT!

November was the most exciting month in many years for 6-meter operators. >From the East Coast, the band was open to Europe and Africa most mornings, and West Coast ops regularly worked into Japan and the Pacific. Stations in the Midwest have been able to work into Japan and Europe on many days as well. In addition, there have been spectacular transcontinental openings most afternoons. Signal strengths are generally good--often S9 or above for

better-equipped stations--so anyone with a 3- or 10- watt radio and dipole can join in the fun. Six meters really heated up on Sunday, November 26: A few West Coast stations reported working into Europe, and Japanese stations were worked as far east as northern New England. Operators in the Midwest report that the band was packed with JA stations up to 50.400 MHz for hours. Conditions should be good at least through December and perhaps into January. If you've ever thought about getting on 6 meters, now's the time!

#### FCC ISSUED CALL SIGN UPDATE

The following is a list of most recently issued FCC call signs (November 1).

DIST	GRP"A" Extra	GRP"B" Advanced	GRP"C" Tech/Gen	GRP"D" Novice
0	WX0Y	KF0GC	N0LFA	KB0FJN
1	NZ1P	KC1QW	N1HBP	KA1UQD
2	WU2H	KE2QE	N2KAM	KB2ISS
3	NX3G	KD3PV	N3HPO	KA3VHS
4	AB4RM	KM4ZZ	N4XHB	KC4MZT
5	AA5OQ	KG5ZR	N5PNP	KB5KXU
6	AA6SA	KK6BZ	N6WUU	KC6GQO
7	AA7CF	KF7XY	N7NTQ	KB7IWN
8	WX8A	KF8CE	N8LMP	KB8IIT
9	WM9F	KE9ST	N9JAI	KB9DNF
Guam	KH2K	AH2CF	KH2EG	WH2AMH
Hawaii	***	AH6KB	NH6VC	WH6CFU
Alaska	***	AL7LP	NL7SV	WL7BVU
USVI	NP2F	KP2BR	NP2DK	WP2AGZ
P.R.	***	KP4QJ	WP4WZ	WP4IPE

\*\*\* indicates that all 2 x 1 call signs have been assigned in those areas.

The N-prefixed Group C (1X3) call# signs blocks for the fourth and sixth call districts have nearly all been assigned. After N4ZZZ and N6ZZZ have been issued, FCC will begin assigning calls from the Group D (2X3) call sign block.

#### 1989 BOY SCOUT JAMBOREE A SUCCESS

Ray Moyer, WD8JKV, Jamboree Coordinator of the National Office of the Boy Scouts of America, recently sent the following letter to ARRL and to others who had supported the Amateur Radio display at the National Scout Jamboree, held August 2-8, 1989, at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia:

"On behalf of the K2BSA radio staff and the Boy Scouts of America, I would

like to thank you for the use of your equipment at the 1989 National Boy Scout Jamboree.

"..K2BSA was located in a 20 by 40 foot tent in a dusty, hot area... We were able to work 157 countries, our new record, and all 50 states. Over 5000 contacts were logged and several thousand messages were sent via all amateur modes. We had countless messages coming into the Jamboree site also.

"One of the most exciting things at the Jamboree was that Amateur Radio was demonstrated to thousands of youth and adult scouters... I know of very few events where over 30,000 non- amateurs could have the opportunity to enjoy that type of equipment. Our staff worked very hard demonstrating Amateur Radio to our visitors. We had a continuous stream of visitors from sun up until late evening. Once the Jamboree was asleep the staff continued to operate.

"...This is to say thank you for your trust and belief in what we did at the Jamboree. I can say now that our goals and hopes did come true."

ARRL LETTER - December 1, 1989 - Volume 8 Number 24 - Part 2 of 3

#### MICROSAT LAUNCH DATE ADVANCES

Arianespace officials have informed AMSAT-NA and the University of Surrey that the launch date of the MICROSATs and the UOSAT D/E satellites has been advanced. The launch date is now planned for January 9, 1990. This change in the launch date is the direct result of the postponement of a previous mission.

Launch preparations will begin on November 27, when the payload integration teams from AMSAT and the University of Surrey, along with their satellites, arrive in Kourou, French Guyana. All of the payloads should be fully integrated aboard the ARIANE IV rocket by December 23.

OSCAR satellite users should monitor the AMSAT HF/VHF Nets, OSCAR-13 Operations Nets, and watch the AMSAT News Service (ANS) bulletins for any further details concerning the launch of the MICROSATs and UOSAT D & E.

#### RADIO AMATEUR CALLBOOK SOLD TO BPI COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

On October 27, Herb Nelson, President and Publisher of the Radio Amateur Callbook announced the completion of the sale of all outstanding shares of Radio Amateur Callbook, Inc. to BPI Communications, Inc.

BPI Communications, Inc. publishes World Radio TV Handbook, a well known publication for short wave listeners. Glen Heffernan, Vice President and

Publisher for BPI says that The Callbook "...is a natural complement to our publication...that will benefit both licensed amateurs and short wave listeners."

The Radio Amateur Callbook, Inc., has published The Callbook, a listing of all radio amateurs world-wide, since 1920. Located in Lake Bluff, Illinois, Radio Amateur Callbook, Inc. is the oldest commercial firm serving the Amateur Radio community.

#### FCC SEEKS INPUT/ASSISTANCE IN RESOLUTION OF AMATEUR DISPUTE

On October 11, FCC Special Services Division Chief Robert H. McNamara wrote to a number of individual amateurs seeking information and comments on phone patches, information bulletins and over-the-air telegraphy practice. The letter requested information and insight that could help bring a resolution to "the unfortunate continuing over-the-air dispute that takes place on the amateur 20 meter band..." a dispute "...which is jeopardizing international goodwill -- a fundamental principle of the rules for the amateur service in the United States..." One recipient of Mr. McNamara's letter was W1AW Trustee John Lindholm, W1XX.

ARRL's response was submitted on November 15, by Counsel Chris Imlay, N3AKD in behalf of Mr. Lindholm as well as the ARRL. It begins with pertinent background information --

"Your letter correctly characterizes as unfortunate the over-the-air disputes that have arisen concerning certain operating practices that have come to be regarded as controversial. However, the League knows of no particular reason to include 'telegraphy practice' in the category of controversial operating practices. As will be discussed, the code practice transmissions from station W1AW continue to be widely used and appreciated.

"...communications on behalf of third parties has been a part of Amateur Radio from its earliest beginnings in the United States. The very basis for the formation of the League in 1914 was to organize amateurs to relay messages on one another's behalf in order to overcome the limited range of the amateur stations of the day.

"It was not until the 1930's that international limitations were placed on amateur traffic, at the insistence of European governments whose telecommunications monopoly was a source of considerable revenue. It was not until 1972 that the FCC specifically prohibited 'business communications'. The imposition of these restrictions was itself quite controversial because it put amateurs, for the first time, in the position of having to evaluate the content of the messages they were relaying.

"Other background essential to an understanding of the issues raised concerns the concept of interference within the Amateur Radio Service and

the extent to which operators are obliged to avoid interfering with one another. Willful and malicious interference is a violation of the rules, but interference that is merely a byproduct of normal operating is not. In the crowded HF amateur bands, avoiding causing unnecessary interference to others is extremely important to efficient operation; but a tolerance for interference and a willingness to cope with it as a fact of life is equally important."

. . . . (continued next part)

ARRL LETTER - December 1, 1989 - Volume 8 Number 24 - Part 2 of 3

#### FCC SEEKS INPUT/ASSISTANCE IN RESOLUTION OF AMATEUR DISPUTE (Continued)

With this as background, the League addressed Mr. McNamara's questions:

FCC: Is there a channel plan for the analog emission segment of each amateur service HF band?

ARRL: There is no channel plan; nor should there be, except in the very limited case where the operation of unattended stations may be authorized by an administration for good cause shown. The degree to which amateur stations can share the same or adjacent frequencies is dynamic: often, interference can be reduced to an acceptable level by making a slight adjustment in operating frequency. This would not be possible in a channelized scheme.

FCC: What portion of the analog segment of each amateur band is being used by FCC licensed amateurs for domestic and international third party telephony communications? What is the general nature of these communications? How many phone patches are transmitted per day by band? What effect does the transmissions of such communications have on the Amateur Service? Why aren't other communication services being used for such communications?

ARRL: In general, domestic third party telephony communications are a relatively small part of the communications being conducted at any given time. Their effect on other amateur communications is minimal except in the very limited instances where disputes arise as to the "right" of one station or group of stations to use a particular frequency. The League regrets that these disputes arise since no amateur has a mutually exclusive right to operate on a particular frequency. Such disputes could often be avoided if the operators involved were more flexible in their choice of operating frequency.

There is a greater temptation to use Amateur Radio inappropriately for international than for domestic third party communications, but abuses can be addressed adequately through enforcement of existing regulations.

FCC: What portion of the analog segment of each amateur band is being used by FCC licensed amateurs for information bulletin telephony communications? How many amateurs listen to these transmissions? How many bulletins are transmitted per day? What effect do these transmissions have on the amateur service? Why aren't amateur digital systems used exclusively for such communications?

ARRL: Station W1AW has transmitted brief information bulletins using telephony emissions for decades. It has been common practice for other amateur stations to conduct similar operations, usually on a localized basis, and usually as a part of a scheduled net or on some other limited, scheduled basis. Such bulletins are very important to the dissemination of timely and accurate information to radio amateurs. In recent years there has been a trend toward amateurs receiving these bulletins via digital modes: however, not all amateurs have access to digital modes, and the telephony bulletins still serve a useful purpose.

FCC: What portion of the analog segment of each amateur band is being used by FCC licensed amateurs for telegraphy practice communications? In view of the availability of recorded telegraphy training material, why are amateur service frequencies still used for this purpose?

ARRL: W1AW transmits Morse code practice in four one-hour segments on weekdays, and three one-hour segments on weekends. While higher speeds are used in Code Proficiency Qualifying Runs, the W1AW transmissions concentrate on the speeds that are required to pass the examination elements for FCC amateur licenses. This service is highly valued, and well accepted in the Amateur Radio community.

Audio cassette tapes and computer programs are useful tools but audio tapes can be memorized after they are used a few times, giving the user a false sense of accomplishment; computer programs require expensive equipment. Neither method provides experience in copying Morse code under actual on-the-air operating conditions.

FCC: Suggest a statement of practices that you believe should be followed by amateur stations transmitting third party communications, information bulletins, and telegraphy practice.

ARRL: At the urging of FCC staff, the League in the mid- 1970's developed the eleven-point "Phone Patch and Autopatch Guidelines" that appears in The FCC Rule Book (Eighth Edition) at page 13-15. These guidelines have stood the test of time, and are generally accepted as a useful supplement to the Commission's Rules.

The League believes that the definition of the term "information bulletin" contained in the Commission's Rules should be strictly applied and enforced. Operators of amateur stations who cannot or do not wish to

conform to these strict limitations may more appropriately seek licenses in the Broadcasting Service.

Finally, with regard to telegraphy practice, the only guidelines needed are to ensure that the purpose of the transmissions is to provide telegraphy practice and not to engage in one-way transmissions that otherwise would be illegal:

- The text should not be randomly generated, since such practice material is readily available via other media.
- The text should be taken from a published, readily available source to facilitate checking accuracy of copy.
- The text should relate in some way to Amateur Radio.
- The text should not be sent repeatedly.

Based on the response from ARRL and others, the FCC will consider its next steps in this on-going HF "dispute." Mr. McNamara says that possible alternatives range from FCC rule making that would ban all third party traffic on amateur frequencies to rules that would designate certain frequencies where only third party communications could be conducted.

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End of INFO-HAMS Digest V89 Issue #997

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